



CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE

Over 100 years ago, Ivan Pavlov conditioned dogs to salivate when a bell was rung, irrespective of whether food was present. “Anchoring” in NLP refers to pairing a sensory stimulus, such as a ringing bell, with a bodily response, such as salivation. It’s very useful for both direct behavioral change (e.g., stimulus = cookies, response = reach for carrot) and for changing someone’s internal state (stimulus = walking on stage, response = feeling of confidence).

Exercise

In order to give yourself access to resourceful states whenever and wherever you need them

Process

1. Find your circle on the floor: What color is it? What size is it? Where is it on the floor?
2. Imagine a feeling that would be very useful for you to access (e.g., confident, or grounded).
3. Remember a time when you felt that way.
4. Allow your body, mind and emotions to experience that feeling as it was at the time you are remembering.
5. Intensify that feeling as much as you can. Make sure that your body posture reflects that feeling.
6. When the feeling is very intense, step into the center of your circle.
7. Allow this feeling to expand down into the circle, saturating it with this feeling you’re holding.
8. Step out of the circle.

Testing

1. Let go of the feeling state that you put into the circle (shake it off, walk it around).
2. Visualize your circle, then step into it, taking a deep breath as you do so.
3. Notice how you feel the resourceful state that you’d put into your circle.
4. If the feeling state is not as intense as you’d like it to be, repeat the original steps to reinforce the state.

After you create your Circle of Excellence, it is always available for you to step into whenever you need to be in the resourceful state(s), which you’ve placed in the circle. When you find yourself in a challenging or important situation, step into your circle.